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GENERAL

1. Pravda correspondent says Chinese will play leading role in Indochina talks:

[REDACTED] Pravda's special correspondent at Geneva stated [REDACTED] after the fall of Dien Bien Phu that the Chinese would probably take the lead in the conference negotiations on Indochina. He said that the Chinese would do the talking on the Communist side because they are responsible inasmuch as "Asia is a Chinese sphere of influence."

Comment: This is the third indication from Soviet sources that China will play the leading Communist role in the negotiations on Indochina. In a talk with Under Secretary Smith on 10 May, Foreign Minister Molotov cited a conversation with Chou En-lai as his primary reason for believing that the Viet Minh proposal of 10 May for the evacuation of the Dien Bien Phu casualties covered Vietnamese wounded. According to Premier Laniel, the Communists have made it clear to the French at Geneva that they must work through the Chinese Communists, and that direct French-Viet Minh conversations are impossible.

SOUTHEAST ASIA

2. Vietnamese premier considers disintegration of government imminent:

[REDACTED] Acting Prime Minister Quat told a CBS correspondent on 12 May the situation in Vietnam had so deteriorated that all semblance of a government might disappear "within ten days." He said that at least 500 Vietnamese troops in regular units of the French Expeditionary Corps had gone over to the enemy with their arms the previous day. The only remedy he saw was Bao Dai's immediate return and assumption of authority.

Several leading French officials in Saigon expressed almost identical views to the CBS newsman on 13 May.

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Comment: The importance attached to Bao Dai's assumption of authority reflects the absence at present of any effective executive authority, rather than confidence in Bao Dai's skill as a leader. Bao Dai's recent actions, especially his placing the national police authority under the control of Saigon racketeers, have aggravated Vietnamese disunity and offer little promise that his leadership will provide a remedy to the Vietnamese political deterioration.

3. Viet Minh forces at Dien Bien Phu to move toward Laos and delta:

Comment: The French have recently moved two battalions from central Laos to the Luang Prabang sector, where French Union strength now totals nine battalions plus 17 Laotian companies. The French also have seven battalions south of Luang Prabang and an additional ten battalions in central Laos.

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NEAR EAST - AFRICA

4.



WESTERN EUROPE

5. "Great stir" caused in West Germany by talk of relations with USSR:



According to American officials in Bonn, a "great stir" has been caused in political and press circles by the plans of Free Democratic deputy Karl Georg Pfeleiderer for a group of Bundestag deputies to make an unofficial trip to Moscow to

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establish cultural and economic relations. Chancellor Adenauer is reported by a chancellery official to have told the chairman of the Free Democratic Party that consideration of Bonn-Moscow relations is "premature" and that West Germany should "not break step with the West."

Some newspapers have welcomed evidence that Bonn is departing from its "rigid foreign policy." Numerous politicians have endorsed consideration of Orbit relations, a development American officials attribute partly to the growing pessimism regarding EDC and Western cooperation.

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